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EARLY LODI FIRE DEPARTMENT

By Lucy Reller and Ralph Lea



▲ Lodi's first motorized fire equipment. A \$5,600 Seagrave auto chemical fire truck, parked on Pine Street in front of the Fred Cary house.

The towns of western California were built of material that would easily burn. After fires, tents gave way to wood as people rebuilt their town buildings. Brick was the desired material but a lot more expensive.

The Lodi Sentinel had just begun publishing in 1881 and immediately started to warn the inhabitants of our village that better fire protection was needed.

With a planing mill and blacksmith shop adjacent to merchants, there was a potential for a fire to burn one block

which was half of town in 1887. This conflagration did occur October 11th with the predicted result.

Rebuilding with brick did help and large fires were limited to packing houses on the east side of the railroad tracks.

One of the big reasons for incorporating the town in 1906 was to have utilities – water, sewer and electricity but fire protection was also high on the list.

Six months after Lodi was incorporated the first meeting of the volunteer firemen was held on June 11, 1907 at the Lodi City Hall located on north

The Roster for No. 1 Company:

- | | |
|---------------------------|------------------|
| • E.E. Breitenbucher | • J.E. Hopkins |
| • M.R. Channell | • J.H. Murphy |
| • Jos. Del Valle | • F.A. Rich |
| • J. Drury | • G.A. Rich |
| • S.F. Duree | • G.W. Schroeder |
| • J.C. Ferguson | • W.A. Spooner |
| • S.F. Gordon | • C.L. Villinger |
| • C.R. Guggolz | • T.F. Wauchope |
| • Perry Gum | • C.B. Welch |
| • H.D. Hopkins | • M.W. Whitaker |
| • Perry Gum, Foreman | |
| • J.E. Hopkins, Assistant | |

The Roster for No. 2 Company:

- | | |
|----------------------------|-------------------|
| • J.G. Anderson | • J.H. Martin |
| • J.V. Bare | • F.H. McLachlan |
| • J.W. Beardsley | • J.S. Montgomery |
| • Wm. Collier | • F.H. Myers |
| • B.C. Daugherty | • J.W. Scott |
| • A.O. Eddleman | • F. Sturla |
| • G. Johnson | • W.J. Thomayer |
| • P.J. Koch | • A.P. Wakefield |
| • V.R. Larson | • A.E. Wauchope |
| • T.R. Lillie | • A.J. Weinert |
| • A.R. Wakefield, Foreman | |
| • A.O. Eddleman, Assistant | |

Sacramento Street which was rented from San Joaquin County.

The meeting was called to order at 8:30 p.m. by S.F. Dukee with 25 petitioners present. Hilliard Welch was elected temporary chairman and E.E. Breitenbucher, secretary.

After stating the objects of the meeting, an election was held with H.E. Welch named Chief of the new Lodi Fire Department.

J.H. Murphy was named First Assistant and V.R. Larson the 2nd Assistant Chief. The group was mainly Lodi businessmen and a total of 40 firemen and a chief was their goal.

Lots were drawn for either No. 1 or No. 2 Fire Companies.

At the next meeting, a week later, F.D. Dukee was elected President, A.J. Weinert, Secretary and E.E. Breitenbucher, Treasurer.

At the June 25th meeting 18 members were present and a vote of thanks went to local saloon owners, Charles Russel, A.F. Kavanaugh and Bert Navin for the cigars presented at the various meetings.

Starting with July the meetings were held once a month. In the August

session the thought was brought up to find a suitable location for a fire exhibition during the upcoming Tokay Carnival. The other concern was to secure a supply of empty boxes and place them at Sacramento and Pine Streets. The firemen were to secure a permit to set some boxes on fire for a drill. The meeting adjourned to a feast of watermelon donated by the Beckman, Welch and Thompson store.

This was the last recorded meeting of the first group of firemen. They fought fires for the next four years without benefit of a unified organization and were down to eight volunteers.

On November 9, 1911 a renewed effort was made that led to a permanent organization.

The vast majority of the new group were the same men that were involved in the first Fire Department. One change, and Lodi's good fortune, was Ed. H. Stark who moved to town from Fergus Falls, Minnesota and purchased a barber shop. Mr. Stark had been a fireman for twenty years, fighting fires with temperatures below zero, with ice paved streets and with hoses that would freeze solid whenever the engine pumps stopped. Mr. Stark had been Fire Chief in Fergus Falls for five years prior to moving to Lodi.

On November 9, 1911 the City Hall was crowded with 41 men as city clerk J.M. McMahon called the meeting to order. T.N. Rogers was elected temporary chairman and A.J. Weinert, secretary. Mr. Weinert read the bylaws of the old fire department and advised the assembly that since it had failed to hold meetings in compliance with its constitution, it was no longer in existence.

The new group elected officers with E.H. Stark, Chief of the Fire Department. T.N. Rogers, President; A.J. Weinert, Secretary and H.E. Welch, Treasurer. The old bylaws were adopted. Mr.

Welch collected 25¢ from each new member for the first months dues. \$12.25 was collected.

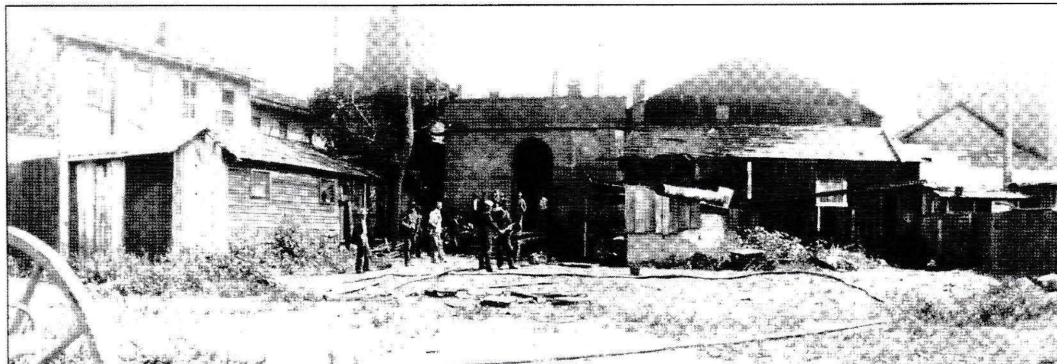
It should be said that no one man had done more than Mr. Welch in endeavoring to make the fire protection of Lodi adequate. He spent a great amount of time and thought on the matter and when money was needed, he gave that too. The old organization was not as successful as it might have been but through no fault of Mr. Hilliard Welch.

To speed up the re-organization of the fire department, meetings were held once a week. The second session had 32 members present and 14 more applicants for membership. An Executive Committee was elected. G.A. Gerlack, C.L. Van Buskirk, W.A. Spooner, A.V. Friedberger and J.C. Guggolz. A First Assistant Chief, A.C. Krump and a Second Assistant Chief, J.L. Pickering was also elected.

The third week seventeen more applicants signed up. It was decided to divide the city into four fire districts. Pine Street and the Southern Pacific Railroad tracks were the dividing lines.

The firemen recommended that the city purchase a lot and erect a building. They also asked for 2,000 feet of fire hose, ladders, axes, spanners for new hydrants and a combination chemical-hose wagon with the horses. Their list included a hand hook and ladder truck, arrange with the telephone company for turning in fire alarms and a bell or whistle at the City Water Works, on the southeast corner of Main and Locust. A new 100,000 gallon water tank for increased water pressure was built next to the water well replacing the old wooden tank.

The Chief's report on the fire of November 28, 1911: A fire in the two story frame building at numbers 24 and 26 N. Main Street. 1,050 feet of hose was



Lodi citizens fighting a fire behind the Lodi Hotel and Barnhart Building with the equipment on hand in 1890. Old Salem School Building on left.

used and two streams of water were put on the fire. There was no insurance on the building and loss was about \$300.00 to the structure plus \$300.00 for contents. The cause of the fire was a defective flue. Actual time to put out fire was 28 minutes.

A.V. Friedberger donated \$25.00 to the department for extinguishing a fire on November 28 in the Friedberger Building on north Main Street.

Fire Chief Stark recommended that an electrician be appointed to examine all wiring in the city for any defects.

A letter from Chief M. McCann of the Stockton Fire Department made a suggestion that the fire hydrants and hoses have the same threads as those in Stockton so there would not be a problem if the occasion ever occurred where Stockton Fire Department had to send their apparatus to Lodi.

In 1912 the meetings were to be held on the first Friday of each month. Twenty new prospective members signed up on January 5th.

President Rogers reported that the refreshment committee took it upon themselves to postpone the refreshments that were to be served that night. A motion was made that the refreshment committee be discharged and the president was directed to appoint a new committee for the future. The president and secretary were authorized to provide food for that night.

The firemen were very serious about having refreshments after the meetings. The next meeting there was a bill of \$4.00 for beans.



At the 1907 Tokay Carnival Lodi's fire hose cart was ready for immediate use. ▲

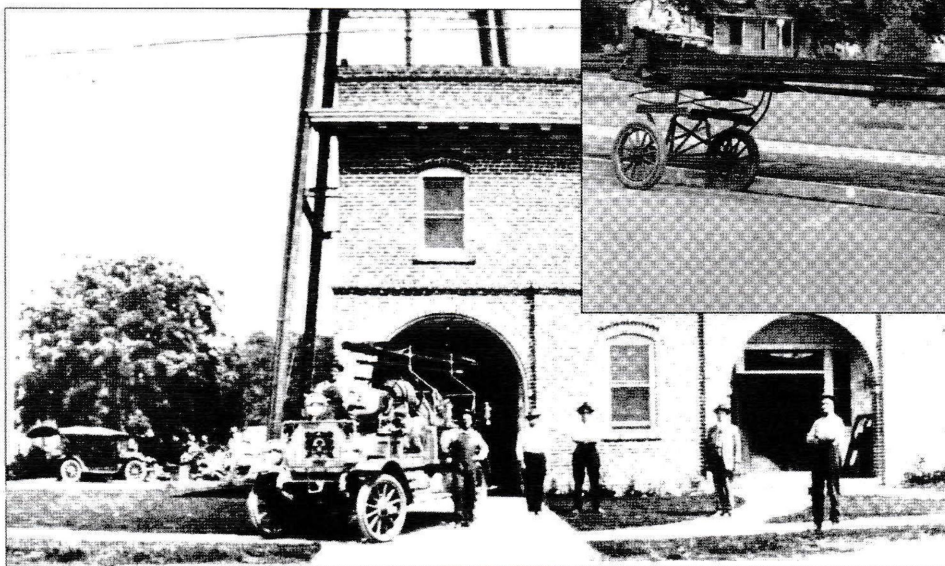
The group decided to have a vice president. C.A. Rich was elected.

President Rogers and Chief Stark were authorized to raise money to purchase a fire alarm system.

They secured the Lyric Theater for two nights of benefit performances. This produced \$266.10 for the fire alarm fund. The money fell short of the \$850.00 needed so the firemen planned a benefit baseball event on March 2nd at Paraiso Park. It was a big event with the Tokay Band giving a concert before the game at

the Southern Pacific Depot Square. They then marched to the park and played throughout the game. The "Has Been's" were tied with the "Would Be's" at 5 runs each in the 7th inning when the game was called on account of promised rain. \$70.80 was raised. A donation of \$15.00 was reported from the Lodi Japanese Association.

On March 7, 1912 a special meeting was called by Vice President C.A. Rich to make arrangements for observing the funeral services of President T.N. Rogers



▲ 1913 Lodi: Firemen and city workers with new truck.



▲ In 1914 the Lodi Volunteer firemen built a ladder truck to transport the '45 fire aide. Art Blewett and Bob McLane up front and Wayne Wilson on the rear wheel.



▲ The new 1921 Seagrave Fire Truck, costing \$13,000 is being tested by the fire underwriters with a few by-standers.

who died the day before. Rogers was the Lodi manager of the Pacific Telephone and Telegraph Co.

A.C. Wright reported at an informal session at noon that day as to what part the firemen would take. E.H. Stark and George Hunting would sit up with the remains that night and A.C. Wright and L.V. Peterson were to sit up the following night. C.A. Rich, A.C. Wright and J.L. Pickering were to serve as pall bearers from the fire department and also to accompany the body to Sacramento where he was to be buried. O.H. Wells was authorized to purchase a floral piece at an expense not to exceed \$10.00.

The firemen were to meet at city hall at 9:30 on the morning of the funeral and march as a body to the church. Chief Stark was to toll the fire bell as the funeral cortege passed under the arch.

On March 8, 1912 the Lodi Volunteer Fire Department met to adopt a resolution of sorrow and sympathy and present to the family of their deceased president.

Chief Stark reported that the firemen's badges would be available at the next meeting and a fire alarm system was to be installed by July 1st.

A motion ordered that ordinance provide each fire escape be at least 2½ feet wide with a landing of 4 feet by 2½ feet protected by a 2½ foot railing.

A.P. Krumb reported that the 4th of July committee had offered prizes of \$10.00 and \$15.00 for a water fight by firemen.

In April of 1912 the City of Lodi Trustees had authorized twelve fire

coats and six pair of trousers and recommend a monthly salary of \$20.00 for the Chief and \$5.00 each for the First and Second Assistants. The salary for the firemen was set at \$1.00 per hour for the first hour and 50¢ per hour for each subsequent hour of time actually employed in fighting fire.

New president C.A. Rich proposed ordinances to establish fire limits, fire prevention and public safety in case of fire. Buildings capable of accommodating one hundred persons had to have three foot doors. Two hundred people needed four foot doors and five foot openings for crowds of 500 people.

A.C. Wright was paid \$2.20 for railroad fare to Sacramento on fire department business. \$24.60 was paid for the cost of the firemen's badges and \$1.00 paid to blacksmith J.J. Pimm for placing the bell.

A.P. Krumb suggested that the band stand at the arch remain until the department finds another suitable place for the hose cart.

The fire bell as erected was rejected and a letter was sent to Gamewell Alarm Company asking them to allow \$180.00 for the old bell and to furnish a better bell.

In 1912 the City of Lodi built their own city hall and fire house at 114 N. Main Street. The city clerk and firemen shared the ground floor. Upstairs were the other city offices, a court room and a firemen's day room. The \$4,000.00 building was completed in July and used jointly for 16 years.

Chief E.H. Stark now divided the

town into 12 districts. The new fire alarm was rung at 8:00 a.m., 12:00 noon and 5:00 p.m. for a while. It was not working satisfactorily so it was changed to ring at 12:00 noon only.

The need for a combination fire truck was strong and the merchants association and citizens urged the trustees to purchase a \$5,000.00 Seagrave Auto-Chemical Fire Apparatus. The truck was ordered in March 1913 and arrived August 30th, with air-cooled engine, hard rubber tires, 1,000 feet of fire hose, two 17 foot ladders and could carry six men and travel 45 miles per hour.

While awaiting the arrival of the new truck, all the small chemical fire extinguishers, a total of twelve, distributed throughout the city were recharged.

At about this time the third company of the fire department was added. It was called the Pioneer Hook & Ladder.

The Board of Trustees asked the city marshal to make arrests of citizens allowing their hydrants to run during a fire. A weed commissioner was appointed to see to the eradication of weeds in vacant lots to diminish the potential of fires.

Chief Stark and Marshal Coleman ordered the Odd Fellows Lodge on the northwest corner of Sacramento and Elm Streets to install a fire escape for the second floor as required by city ordinance.

Even after receiving the new truck, the horse and old rig were kept at Gilbeaus Livery Stable for an emergency. When Gilbeau raised his monthly horse service to \$10.00 it was decided to get along without the horse and wagon.

In the month of November, thirteen firemen were dropped from the roll for non payment of dues. A few volunteers were not too happy paying to belong to the department.

City Engineer Barzelotti presented the department a handsome map of the city fire districts which was framed and hung in the engine house.

At the June 12, 1914 firemen's meeting there were fifteen new members added and eight older members were dropped for failing to attend fire drills. Most Lodi volunteer firemen enjoyed going to the fires but were not too happy to be present each month for meetings and practice the necessary fire drills.

The annual election resulted with G.A. Gerlack, President; W.H. Faust, Vice President; A.C. Wright, Secretary; H.E. Welch, Treasurer; and Ed Stark, Chief.

The department must not have disposed of the horse and wagon, for in July of 1914 they were moved from Gilbeaus to Siegalkoff's Stable.

There were complaints that the street sprinkling wagons were leaving the water turned on in the high hydrants, used for filling tanks, causing a delay in fighting fires. There were two types of hydrants used. A high one for dust control and the low ones used by the fire department. All the fire hydrants were painted white. Also some automobile owners had 50 gallon tanks of gasoline stored in their private garages without permission. Chief Stark examined the town for gas tanks and found none particularly dangerous, although some disobeyed the law. A new 50 foot extension was needed and the firemen settled on a 45 foot Seagrave ladder.

After the purchase, the Fire Department was paying W.E. Riggs for storing the long ladder but Joe Friedberger allowed the department to house the ladder rig, at no charge, in the rear of his building near the Peirano store.

In 1915 W.H. Faust was elected president and F.H. McLachlan vice president for the only changes. The firemen agreed to turn out and assist the Women's Club on the yearly clean up day.

By July, five large fire plugs had been installed in the business district. That made it possible to furnish more water when needed.

The city had purchased a whistle to sound the fire alarm but it refused to work so the old bell was back in service.

A New Year's dance was planned for January 1, 1916. To raise money, tickets were to be sold and they did sell \$128.00 worth, however, expenses amounted to \$115.00 so little profit was realized.

The Board of Fire Underwriters was asked to furnish a tarpaulin to protect personal property at fires.

In May 1916, Chief Stark gave his annual report showing twenty fires involving a value of \$138,850.00 of property with a loss of \$2,330.00. An inventory of fire apparatus was valued at \$11,862.00. The firemen were asking for fire pay for each hour equal to the first hour.

F.H. McLachlan was elected the new President and A.P. Wakefield, Vice President. At each meeting there was a turn over of firemen. Some joining and a few retiring.

The department decided to pay injured firemen \$21.00 a week and \$5.00 a week for the next four weeks substantiated by a physicians' certification.

It was reported a fire hydrant located in the alley of the block surrounded by Elm, Locust, Grand (Garfield Street) and Cherokee Lane was being blocked by the wall of a barn. The owner agreed to remove some of the boards.

There were many improvements in the city water system during this period such as extending the water main on Sacramento Street from Elm Street to Lodi Avenue.

For increased safety the Lodi Fire Chief asked both school principals to hold regular fire drills for their students.

Minor discussions did come up at firemen meetings, such as the dispute over the payment of janitor's salary for cleaning up after meetings. The payment having been withheld by the secretary on account of C.R. Gray and C.L. Fowler both claiming payment. It was decided to pay Gray who was appointed by the president and extend a vote of thanks to Fowler.

The annual Fireman's Dance was replaced with entertainment at the Tokay Theater which realized \$135.03 from the benefit performance. The secretary was to talk to Mr. Herb Siever, theater owner, to see how much the ushers desired.

The fire chief purchased two pairs of insulated pliers from the proceeds as well as a pair of #10 rubber gloves to be placed on the fire truck for the use of linemen around electric wires. He also had A.T. Thomas paint the curbs with red lead reading "Do Not Park Here," which meant a twenty foot distance from the fire plugs.

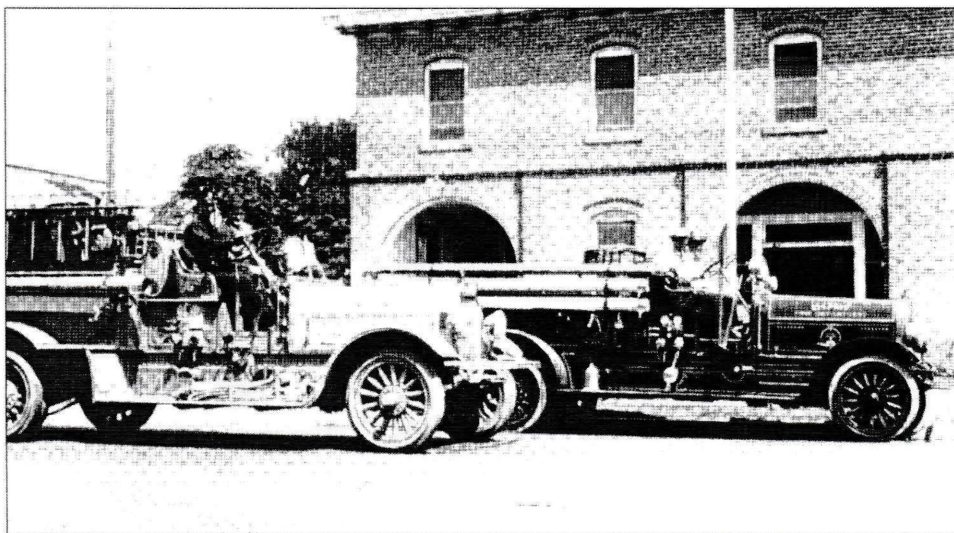
May, 1917 election results, E.H. Stark, Chief; J.E. Hopkins, President; L.H. Rinn, Vice President; W.H. Faust, Secretary; and again H.E. Welch, Treasurer.

Water pressure was a constant problem particularly between 5:00 and 8:00 p.m. The city decided to sink another well and the fire department was consulted for a suggestion on the location. They recommended the Barnhart tract because of the packing sheds and canning factory in that area being without adequate fire protection.

In July 1917 C.L. Van Buskirk donated \$25.00 to the Firemen's Relief Fund. It was just in time to pay J. Sanguinetti \$22.00 for injuries received at the June 18 fire.

At the end of four years the firemen's chemical tank needed repairs.

The Lodi Fire Department remained stable through 1920 with Ed Stark, Chief; M. Robert Channel was the First Assistant Fire Chief and J.W. Landback, Second Assistant Chief. L.P. Rinn, Vice President; Wm. H. Fause, Secretary and Hilliard Welch, Treasurer. The Wide Awake Hose Company Foreman, T.R. Leeck and assistant M. Rodacker. Fred Spiekerman, Foreman of Alert Hose



Both Lodi fire trucks are parked in front of the main fire house (circa 1925). ▲



▲ Fire drill in 1926 with George Polenske, Frank Buehl, Robert Channell, Wayne Wilson and Art Blewett and four others, unknown.

Company and Henry Gimbel, assistant. John Schaeffer, Foreman of the Pioneer Hook and Ladder Company with P.W. Lehman, assistant. George Olenberger, Foreman of the Chemical Engine Company with Wm. Schnabel, assistant.

In September of 1920 the City of Lodi Trustees purchased a Seagrave triple combined fire pump truck at a cost of \$13,000.00. The pump was capable of three streams of water at one time. With only 150 feet of hose the two inch nozzle was able to spray water 50 feet high at a 200 foot distance.

Lodi was fortunate to have had that fire equipment on Saturday, July 2, 1921 when the Main Street fire erupted at 5:30 a.m. under the Earl Fruit Company shed at Main and Pine Streets burning two blocks to Main and Walnut Streets. Lost were the Anderson Fruit shed, the Reliance Lumber Co. building, the Peppers Fruit shed, Steacy's Blacksmith shop, a number of Japanese stores owned by H.N. Madison, the Europe Hotel and another hotel, just completed, both owned by W. Taioli.

C.M. Ferdun lost his building at the Oak Street corner. E. DeMartine owned

the Cosmopolitan Hotel and addition at Walnut and Main Streets. Both structures were destroyed in the fire which spread east to the home of A. Stathopolous. Mrs. R. Siegalkoff lost a barn and the Gerald Wagers house was badly damaged.

Fire Chief Stark called the Stockton Fire Department and they responded with two pumping engines.

Just five days later on July 7th the City of Lodi decided that only fireproof buildings may be erected in the burned district. The land owners on the east side of Main Street said they would not rebuild if fruit companies were allowed to put up frame sheds.

On July 12, 1921 the new ordinance was in effect.

This disaster made the city buy the second new fire engine and on December 6, 1921 it was tested on Main Street. It pumped 750 gallons every minute.

In February of 1924 the volunteers of the Lodi Fire Department urged the city trustees and Mayor J.W. Shattuck to build a fully equipped fire house on the west side of the Southern Pacific tracks.

It was stated that the largest part of the business district was on the west side of town.

The result was a new bungalow fire house on Maple Square, located on the southeast corner of Lodi Avenue and Sacramento Street. The \$5,000.00 house and \$13,000.00 chemical fire engine were dedicated November 13, 1924 with a parade, open house and in the evening a banquet at Hotel Lodi, where Mayor W.A. Spooner handed the keys to Chief E.H. Stark.

Although it previously had been decided not to allow any family to live there, on December 8, 1924, Peter Morison, fire truck driver and his wife moved into the fire house bungalow.

In the 1925 election the new officers were, G.A. Gerlack, President; E.H. Stark, Chief; L.H. Rinn, Vice President; Homer Green, Secretary; H.E. Welch, Treasurer; Matt Rodacker, First Assistant Chief and Jesse W. Landback, Second Assistant Chief.

In 1926 the Burton Towne home outside of Lodi had a fire and was a total loss with over \$30,000.00 damages.

The Japanese Theater, a five year

old building on North Stockton Street had a fire with over \$5,000.00 worth of damages. The cause of the fire was unknown.

A car and garage burned at 500 East Flora Street when someone struck a match to look at the contents of a crock placed under the gasoline petcock for filling.

To settle an argument between fire truck drivers Frank Buell and Matt Sherman at Maple Square as to whose turn it was to mow the lawn, Fire Chief E.H. Stark mowed the lawn himself. He wanted to know whose turn it would be next week to mow the lawn.

In 1927 the California State Firemen's Association convention was held in Stockton and between 250-300 women were to be entertained in Lodi.

E.H. Stark began his 18th year as Fire Chief. He was 58 years of age.

The City of Lodi again started testing the fire whistle at 8:00 a.m., 12:00 noon and 5:00 p.m.

On May 1, 1927, the Owens and Collins fruit shed on North Sacramento Street and two small cottages burned, but the fire department was able to save

the adjoining Atlas Iron Works.

In 1928 the offices of the City of Lodi government moved to the present City Hall. The fire department then took over the entire building on Main Street that was built in 1912.

May 12, 1928, E.H. Stark resigned as Fire Chief and was elected Vice President. Matt Sherman was elected new Fire Chief with Matt Rodacker as First Assistant; Jessie Landback, Second Assistant; G.A. Gerlack, President; H.E. Welch, Treasurer and H.E. Looser, Secretary.

There was a re-organization of the Fire Companies as follows:

Alert Hose Co., William Meyers, Foreman and H.P. Dhiel, Assistant.

Wide Awake Hose Co., George Meyers, Foreman and John Jacobsen, Assistant.

Hook & Ladder Co., George Polenske, Foreman and Karl Kuchnast, Assistant.

Chemical Co., J. Phillipi, Foreman and Al Peters, Assistant.

In 1928 there were 34 fire alarms with a loss of \$13,365.00 in property.

There were 5 defective flues, 7 grass fires, 3 gas stove explosions, 2 due to defective wiring, 2 caused by cigarettes, 2 overheated stoves, a motorcycle explosion, boys playing with matches, burning paper, torch and tar and 9 unknown causes.

On June 6, 1929 the Tracy-Waldon Fruit Shed and The California Pine Box Co. were destroyed by fire. The buildings were on Tokay Street near the cannery.

On September 2, 1930, Mayor W.A. Spooner stated they would name a new Fire Chief to replace Bert Dougherty who was also Superintendent of Streets. The new plan to start in October would staff both fire stations with two men day and night. The Chief was to be located at the East Side fire station.

In 1931 George D. Polenske was Lodi Fire Chief with Hap Looser, President.

July 1, 1931, the Volunteer Fire Department and the Lodi Athletic Club stage a tug of war at Municipal (Hale) Park during the intermission of the Tokay Band concert. They were preparing for their participation in the muscle contest at the July 4th celebration in



LODI FIRE DEPARTMENT 1936. Back row (l to r): Matt Sherman, Gustave Hust, John Jacobsen, Jack Peters, Irvin Newcomb, Art Blewett, Albert Nuss, Wayne Wilson and Harold Dames. Second row: Bob McLane, Robert Channell, Kenneth McLane, Bert Wilson, Frank Buell, Jake Philippi and Louie Rinn. Third row: Matt Rodacker, Leonard Kolb, John Perrin, John Stirn, John Schaeffer, Jerry Hellwig and Earl May. Kneeling: Clifford Bull, Albert Peters, John Miller, William Moser, George Polenske, Jack Baker, David Mittlieder and Harold Diehl.

Stockton. They ended the match in a draw after a 30 minute limit.

The Lodi team was captained by Earl May and they met the Victor Tops and Bruella Tuggers at the Italian Club picnic at Micke's Grove. Irwin Newcomb was 6 feet 4 inches tall and weighed over 200 pounds. The volunteer firemen asked him to join and anchor their Tug of War team. He did and stayed for 45 years.

An ordinance was passed making it a violation to follow fire trucks to fires and parking within 400 feet of fires.

On October 9, 1932 four fruit sheds in Youngstown Station burned. Part of the Lodi Fire Department was called upon to fight the blaze and they were able to save the Earl Fruit Shed and the Youngstown store.

In December 1933 the fire truck had just arrived to put out a fire at a house on Olive Court. As the truck brakes engaged, the spokes broke and both wheels crumbled.

Also in December of 1933, the thirteen year old Woods Model School was destroyed by a fire caused by defective wiring. The Lodi volunteer fire fighters saved the desks and equipment from two classrooms and the auditorium, which were moved to the Woodbridge Fruit Company packing shed. Principal Irma Reese moved 219 pupils into this temporary school.

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The Fire Companies now had numbers: For No. 1: Bert and Wayne Wilson, Foremen. Company No. 2: Art Blewett and Clair Crowe, Foremen Clifford Bull and L.C. Kolb, Foremen for No. 3 and C. Vaccarezza and Jake Philippi Foremen of Fire Company No. 4. Kenneth McLane was the full time Fire Marshal.

Lodi volunteers were starting to use a resuscitator and Fire Prevention Week was introduced by the Volunteer Fire Department and the Lodi District Chamber of Commerce.

In July and August, 1934 arson fires were started at the Foster & Woods Cannery. Gasoline soaked rags were found at the scene. In October a suspect was arrested at the Curry & Comartin Slaughter House, near the Mokelumne River just north of Lodi.

In September, 1935, President Clifford Bull, Fire Chief Polenske and Secretary Earl May attended the State Firemen's Convention in Riverside and secured Lodi as the site of the next state meeting. Earl May was elected 2nd Vice President of the California organization.

December 15, 1935, a fire caused \$5,000.00 damage to the PG&E office in the First National Bank building.

In May of 1936 a Ladies Auxiliary of the Lodi Fire Department was formed with Mrs. H.C. Diehl as President and 23 charter members. The organization was started just in time to assist in entertaining 300 firemen and guests at the California State Firemen's four day meeting held in Lodi starting August 18, 1936.

Governor Merriam and Congressman Frank H. Buck addressed the state fire fighters at the Lodi Armory during their 14th conclave.

In 1937 the Standard Oil warehouse on Victor Road and the Eden Cash Grocery were swept by fire.

On April 6, 1938, the Lodi Volunteer Firemen saved the town of Victor when the Pacific Fruit Co. shed burned.

In June, Earl May was elected Lodi Fire Chief and Otto Polenske became the new President of the fire department.

The 12th annual Halloween Masquerade Ball was held October 29, 1938.

October 30, 1939 the new fire truck had arrived in Lodi after a long delay due to the war. The Seagrave "Quad" was a combination pump and ladder truck costing \$15,208.17. It came equipped with 250 feet of lightweight metal ladders, a powerful set of flood lights, gas masks, helmets and coats for

the entire department.

The Inhalator Squad of the Lodi Fire Department helped save the lives of a nine year old boy and newborn infant with their oxygen equipment.

In 1939 Lodi had a good fire record and the volunteers helped fight nearby fires. One at the Happyholm Dairy southwest of town and two fruit sheds and The Whiskerino Hall in Woodbridge. The location of these fires lacked fire fighting equipment but the Lodi Volunteers saved several homes at both places.

The Lodi Fire Department started with an all volunteer group of non-paid citizens. It slowly moved to full time career help. During the period of this article the volunteer firemen were a large part of all fire fighting efforts.

LODI FIRE CHIEFS

1907-1911

Hilliard E. Welch

1911-1928

Edwald H. Stark

1928

Matt Sherman

1928-1930

Bert C. Dougherty

1931-1938

George D. Polenske
(first term)

1938-1942

Earl May

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